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GUPPY

THE CATALOGING OF ANONYMOUS LITERATURE

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The Cataloguing of Anonymous Literature

BY

THE EDITOR

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June, 1901, *for Private Distribution*

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THE CATALOGUING OF ANONYMOUS LITERATURE.

By The Editor.

OF all the difficulties with which a librarian has to contend, there is probably none so trying as the cataloguing of anonymous and pseudonymous literature; indeed there is no other class of literature that presents so many stumbling-blocks.

It is therefore not without considerable hesitation that we venture to ask the attention of our readers to a few discursive remarks upon this, the knottiest of all subjects with which they are likely to have to deal.

We should like it to be clearly understood, however, from the very outset, that it is not our intention to propound new theories, or to suggest new schemes for the more successful treatment of this particular class of literature, but rather to take a hurried glance at the principal rules that have been framed from time to time for the guidance of cataloguers, in the belief that there are, at least, some of our readers to whom, like ourselves, such a treatment of the subject may be at once interesting and instructive.

At the conclusion of the review, we shall venture, with all modesty, to offer a few criticisms, with the object of determining which of the various rules under review are the best adapted to render this much abused department of literature more readily accessible in our libraries than generally is now the case.

We are not so insular in our ideas as to imagine that English methods are best, because they are English. Indeed, we cannot disguise the fact, unpleasant though it may be to some of us, that in matters bibliographical England cannot yet claim the laurel of pre-eminence.

It is true that efforts have been made within the last

few years to arouse us from our lethargy, and fortunately with some measure of success, but there is still much for us to do before we can claim to be placed even on a level with other countries.

We have consequently not confined our review to the English rules, but have borrowed much from the French, the German and the American compilations, being not a little indebted to Mr. Cutter's invaluable *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue.*

Many of our remarks will consist of what may appear to some to be superfluous reiterations of obvious truths, but it must be conceded, that they are the very principles which most urgently require to be insisted upon if the work of the present generation is to live.

Mr. Winter Jones in his presidential address before the Conference of Librarians in 1878 said: When it was determined to reduce to one system the several catalogues of the British Museum Library, which had been compiled at different times and on different plans, it was anticipated that about thirty rules would suffice for the purpose, and it was proposed *inter alia* that anonymous works should be catalogued under the first word not being an article or a preposition, following the rule laid down by Barbier. Ultimately it was determined that the leading word should be adopted, and then our troubles began. What was to be done when there were two or more leading words? Was the first always to be taken, or was the cataloguer to decide which was the most leading word? In the effort to meet all these cases and others of equal difficulty the thirty rules grew to nearly a hundred.

What is an "Anonymous Work"?

As very much depends on the definition of an anonymous work, let us, in the first instance, take a rapid glance at the various definitions which from time to time have been advanced.

It will not be necessary to go farther back than Barbier, who was, we may say, the first person seriously to grapple with this knotty question.

BARBIER.—In the preface to the first edition of his *Dictionnaire des Ouvrages anonymes*, issued in 1806, Monsieur Barbier defines an anonymous work as follows: "On appelle ouvrage anonyme celui sur le frontispice duquel l'auteur n'est pas nommé".

Some sixteen years later, in the preface to his second edition of the same work, we find that he had so modified his view as to describe an anonymous work as one printed without the author's name either in the title or in the preliminary matter.

In 1872 a third edition of Barbier's work was projected, to be published as a supplement to Quérard's *Supercheries littéraires dévoilées*, a new edition of which had been prepared by Brunet. This new edition of the *Dictionnaire des Ouvrages anonymes* was edited by Barbier's son, assisted by two of the librarians of the Bibliothèque Nationale (René et Paul Billard), and it is interesting to notice the further modifications which these gentlemen made in the definition, or rather, should we say, to notice how they reverted to Barbier père's original definition.

In addition to the strictly speaking anonymous works, they treat as anonymous everything which does not constitute a pseudonym or literary fraud:—

1. Works in which the name of the author is represented by initials.
2. Works in which the author is represented by stars.
3. Works in which the authors are designated by any vague qualification which does not constitute an ordinary appellation for an author.

In justification of their view they instance as a work under the first category, "author represented by initials," *Dictionnaire sociale et patriotique, ou Précis raisonné des Connaissances relatives à l'Économie morale civile et politique par M.C.R.L.F.D.B.A.A.P.D.P* [which has been discovered to represent *M. C. R. Le Fèvre de Bauvray, Avocat au Parlement de Paris*, 1769].

To have placed that work under the final initial—the common rule—would have been wrong. How then were you to determine which initial to use? common sense would not assist you, and intuition scarcely would have helped you to discover that the author's name began with the fourth letter, L.

With regard to works in which the author's name is to be found either in the dedication, privilege, prefatory letter or epilogue, the editors say that all compilers of catalogues, notwithstanding Barbier père's modification, continue to treat such works as anonymous. They cite an instance of the author's name being buried in the middle of a volume in a note. That volume should certainly be considered anonymous, for even with the volume in hand it is not by any means certain that the name of the author would be disinterred.

THE BODLEIAN.—According to Bodley's rules a work is to be regarded as anonymous for purposes of headings when the name of the writer does not occur on the title-page, even though it occur in the body of the work.

In another rule (No. 11), which is somewhat ambiguous, works with initials are to be regarded as anonymous.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.—The Cambridge rule goes farther than this and says that "works of an author not assuming any actual name, or describing himself by a word or phrase used to designate an office, profession, party, etc., or by some other circumlocution, or by initials or other letters or signs (as stars) to be dealt with as anonymous".

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.—The Association in framing its rules was careful to avoid anything like a definition, but we may assume that the framers did not consider a work bearing initials to be anonymous, otherwise they would not have provided for the placing of the last initial first.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—According to the British Museum rule a book which originally appeared without the author's name remains anonymous even after the author is well known, and the book has been republished with the author's name on the title-page.

THE "BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE".—The Bibliothèque Nationale considers a work to be anonymous if the author's name does not appear on the title-page, or if the author is designated by an initial; and places in the same category all collected productions of various writers when they number more than five.

BERLIN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.—Dr. Graesel, librarian

of the University of Berlin, whom we may take as representing the German school, in his *Grundzüge der Bibliothekslehre*, considers a work to be anonymous even when the name of the author is found in the preface, dedication or elsewhere in the text. Periodicals and official documents have, strictly speaking, no author, says Dr. Graesel, and must be considered anonymous.

AMERICA.—Mr. Cutter, as representing the American school of bibliography, practically adopts Barbier's original definition, justifying his view by adding that, strictly speaking, a work is not anonymous if the author's name appears anywhere in it, but it is safest to treat it as anonymous if the author's name does not appear on the title-page.

Sufficient has been advanced to demonstrate that no two authorities are agreed upon even the first principle in the treatment of anonymous literature—the definition of an anonymous work—although there is a distinct leaning to the opinion: that a work should be considered as anonymous when the name of the writer does not occur upon the title-page.

Treatment of Anonymous Works.

If there has been a difference of opinion as to the definition, we shall find as we glance at the rules for the treatment of such works, that the difference there is much more strongly accentuated.

BARBIER.—The simple plan upon which Monsieur Barbier constructed his invaluable *Dictionnaire des Ouvrages anonymes* was of arrangement under the first word not an article. That, remarks Mr. Wheatley, in his *How to Catalogue a Library*, works admirably, because the consulter has in his hand the book whose author he seeks. In the case of a catalogue, Mr. Wheatley goes on to say, the case is different, for the consulter has not the book before him, and wishes to find it from the leading idea of the title, which is probably all he remembers. That is a very strong, and, we venture to think, very misleading assertion to make. Supposing that we, possessing an anonymous work, the author of which we do not know, have a desire to find out whether it is contained in a certain library, and whether the catalogue

of that library can furnish any further bibliographical information than we already possess. If the first-word rule works so admirably in the case of the bibliography, why should it not work equally well in the case of a catalogue? Personally, we have no sympathy with the finely drawn distinction which is set up by many bibliographers and librarians to-day between the bibliography and the catalogue.

Is it not the duty of every librarian, in the first place to enable a reader to know without recourse to a bibliography whether there is or is not in his library the work which he holds in his hand, or of the title of which he has an exact transcript? That information can only be ascertained, with any degree of certainty, if the first-word rule is adopted either for the main entry or as a cross-reference; otherwise it is impossible to say under what ingenious heading the book may have been buried.

We should like to re-echo the sentiment expressed by Professor Jewett, the first librarian of the Smithsonian Institution, in his report on the construction of catalogues, printed in 1853:—

"That as bibliographers we cannot indeed but wish that the catalogue of every library were a bibliographical dictionary of its books".

The endeavour of every librarian should be to make his catalogue as perfect as possible. Cataloguing against time is a grave mistake, and yet, alas! it very largely obtains at the present day.

THE BODLEIAN.—The Bodleian treatment, according to the rules printed in 1882, is to place the anonymous work "under the chief subject-word or words of the title, with a second heading or cross-reference where advisable under or from any noticeable word or catch-title. If the name of the writer occurs in the work but not on the title-page, it is to be regarded as anonymous." It is further provided that when only the initials or pseudonym of an author occur in a work, it is to be regarded for the purposes of headings as anonymous, with cross-references from the initials or pseudonym to the first heading, the last initial to be placed first.

No provision is made for a first-word entry!

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.—The Cambridge rule is not only much more exhaustive but much clearer:—

"Anonymous publications relating to any act or to the life of a person, or addressed to any person whose name occurs on the title, are to be catalogued under such personal name; when relating to any place, district or country, they are to be catalogued under the place name. When no such name of person or place occurs, then that of an assembly, corporate body, society, board, party, sect or denomination is to be taken as a heading, coupled with the name of the country or place where such body belongs, the name of country or place to form the first word of the heading."

The last condition is a bad one unless a cross-reference is made from the style or title of the body.

Works containing collected productions of various writers upon particular subjects, such as Ugolini *Thesaurus antiquitatum sacrarum,* to be entered under editor's name. (Why not under subject with cross-reference from editor?) If no editor's name appears, then it is to be catalogued as an anonymous work.

"Anonymous works . . . to which none of the foregoing rules apply must be catalogued under the subject which is prominently referred to on the title-page, the primary consideration being under what heading the book will be most easily found; when there is no special subject mentioned, and the title is a catch-title, as in the case of most novels and pamphlets, the first word not an article to stand at the head. . . . When the author of an anonymous work has been ascertained without a doubt, it is to be placed under the author's name with a cross-reference from the anonymous heading. . . ."

Even at Cambridge the first-word entry or cross-reference is only partially resorted to.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.—The Association rule is: "Enter anonymous works under the chief subject-word, with a cross-reference where advisable from any noticeable word. Titles of periodicals under the first word not an article."

If that rule is useful in the case of periodicals, why was

it not applied to all anonymous works, if not for the main entry at least for a cross-reference?

Initialisms are treated by the Association in the same unsatisfactory way as at the British Museum, and at the Bodleian, *i.e.*, arranged under the last letter.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—The principal rules provided by the British Museum for the treatment of anonymous works are as follows:—

> Under the name of any person, real or fictitious, about whom the book is written if named therein (civil actions under the first of the parties, criminal trials under the defendant).
>
> Under the name of a person to whom a book is addressed (not merely dedicated).
>
> Under the name of any society or other body forming the subject of the work.
>
> Under the name of any country, city or place mentioned in the title.
>
> Under the first substantive, or in default of one, the first word in the title.
>
> Initialisms under the last letter, the others in round brackets.
>
> Collections of works by several writers with a collective title, as *Muratori Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, under the editor, and if there is no editor, then under the collective title.
>
> Anonymous translations are entered under the same heading as the work translated.

Here again no provision is made for an invariable first-word entry or cross references.

THE "BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE".—The Bibliothèque Nationale has been bold enough to adopt a system which will not, we venture to think, at once commend itself to many of our readers: it is to relegate anonymous, polyonymous society collected works, and periodical publications to a separate part of the catalogue. In other words, they propose to treat them quite apart from the general alphabet.

The reason given for grouping these three classes of works, is that neither bear any special denomination which can connect it with the name of an author.

The rule laid down is: "To arrange under the first word not an article". Unfortunately it is not a rigid one, for it goes on to say, "that as a general rule the cataloguer must

not slavishly follow the too often vague first line, but use his discretion as to the word which serves best as the designation of the title".

We cannot help thinking that there is danger in that concession, for we all know how many anonymous works there are, which may, under such a rule, be catalogued by a dozen different hands in as many different ways. Would it not have been much safer to have required an invariable first-word entry of every work in the classes referred to, and then to have allowed the cataloguer to exercise his discretion —may we say his inventive ingenuity—upon the cross-references?

The common objection raised to following the first-word rule is, that the groups under such common first words as "Report," "Mémoire," "Arrêt," "Adresse," "Procès Verbal," "History," "Treatise," etc., would become so unwieldy as to create confusion.

Can that objection be maintained? Take Barbier, Halkett and Laing, Somervogel or Melzi, and show us any heading which is so unwieldy as to confuse the seeker! There is this, however, to be said, that great care must be exercised in the alphabetical arrangement. Given that condition it will be as easy to handle as any ordinary dictionary, as easy in fact to handle as "Halkett and Laing" or "Barbier," against whom we have heard no complaint.

When the author of an anonymous work is known, the Bibliothèque Nationale rule is to make the main entry under the author's name with cross-references from the anonymous title. That is, perhaps, not an improvement upon the British Museum rule, where a work once anonymous is treated as always anonymous for purposes of the main entry, *but* it gives the first-word entry.

In dealing with the initialisms the Bibliothèque Nationale rule requires all works in which the author is designated by an initial to be treated as anonymous. In framing this rule the Commission justified its action by pointing out that the British Museum by adopting the opposite view finds itself with 192 columns, or some 4,000 entries, under the initial "B". A cross-reference at least should be made under the

initial, but the question to determine is, should it be the first or last letter.

Collective works, comprising those of which the authors number at least five, are to be treated in the same category as "anonyma". When the authors number no more than four, they are to be arranged under the first author with ample cross-references. Why the line should be drawn at "four" does not transpire in the report of the Commission, and is difficult to understand.

CUTTER.—It now remains for us to glance rapidly at Mr. Cutter's rules, which are taken from the third edition of his *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 1891:—

> Make a first-word entry of all anonymous works, except for anonymous biographies, which should be entered under the subject of the life.
>
> When the author is known enter under the author's name.

No provision is made for even a cross-reference under the first word.

> If the author is not known with certainty, but only attributed, make main entry under first word with note "attributed to such and such an author," and cross-references from the supposed author.
>
> Periodical publications to be treated as anonymous, and entered under first word.
>
> Almanacs and other annuals to be treated as anonymous.
>
> Transactions are not treated in this category, inasmuch as the society acting through its members is the author.
>
> There are many works which occupy the borderland between the two classes, periodicals and transactions, but they need not puzzle or bewilder the cataloguer, for he will remember that it does not really very much matter which way he decides, provided he is careful to make all necessary cross-references.
>
> Translations of anonymous works should be entered under the same heading as the original, as also criticisms upon such works, whether the library possesses the original or not.
>
> A subject-reference should be made for all anonymous biographies: as for example, *The Perfect Polititian*, which is a life of Cromwell. This should be entered under Cromwell as well as under the first word, "Perfect".
>
> *Treason's Masterpiece or Conference between Oliver and a Committee of Parliament*, should have a cross-reference under Cromwell in addition to the first-word main entry under "Treason's Masterpiece".
>
> To give yet another example, that cited by Mr. Cutter: *True and Exact Account of the Scarlet Gowns.* "True" is the first word, and

therefore should be taken for the main entry, but "Scarlet Gowns" is a phrase very likely to remain in the memory of any one who had seen the title, and therefore should be used as a cross-reference.

Anonymous works whose titles have been changed in succeeding editions, should be entered under the first, with a cross-reference from all later forms.

That concludes our review or analysis of the more important sets of rules, and we will now make a selection of those which commend themselves to us, as likely to render this class of literature more readily accessible in our respective libraries.

Conclusions.

DEFINITION.—As it is necessary in the first place to agree upon the definition, we venture to suggest that the safest plan is to treat as anonymous "every work on the title-page of which the author's name does not occur, even though it is contained in the body of the work," whether they be productions of governments, parliaments, assemblies, corporate bodies, or societies. Strictly speaking, as Mr. Cutter remarks, a book is not anonymous if the author's name appears in it, but it is safest to treat it as anonymous if the author's name does not appear on the title-page.

A work published without the author's name always remains anonymous as far as the anonymous edition is concerned, and should be treated as such even after the author is well known, and the work has been republished with the name on the title page.

Mr. Wheatley objects to this, because, you would have the same book in two places, instancing *Waverley* the anonymous editions of which would be found under "Waverley" the others under "Scott". And why not? The use of ample and judicious cross-references would obviate every difficulty in the tracing of such a work. To whichever headings a consulter turned he would find references to the other.

One of the pleasures of a true bibliographer's or cataloguer's life is to penetrate the obscurity which ofttimes hides, or, as in the case of a pseudonym, to tear away the mask which

so frequently disguises the features of some well-known writer, and so complete the entry which he had previously relinquished with feelings of regret at the incompleteness of his work.

How such treatment as that can result in bibliographical riddles we are at a loss to understand. Yet that is, or was Mr. Wheatley's dictum.

That reminds us of another of Mr. Wheatley's pronouncements which we should like to challenge: that "anonymous books are the 'pariahs of literature'". Is that so? Can that assertion be upheld? We have only to define "Pariah" as "A member of any singularly degraded class, one generally despised, an outcast, a vagabond" to see how exceedingly inappropriate and inaccurate such a statement is.

Apply it to Mr. Wheatley's own example *Waverley*, which from the first has been anything but a pariah.

SELECTION OF RULES.—The rules which commend themselves to us, and which for our own use we have decided to adopt, are the following:—

Under the name of any person, real or fictitious, about whom a book is written, or to whom it is addressed when occurring on the title-page:—

"Tribute to memory of W. Cowper."
"Travels into several remote parts of the world by Lemuel Gulliver (pseud. of J. Swift)."
"Tragedy of Nero."

Under the name of any locality: country, county, city or place mentioned in the title:—

"Handbook to Brighton."
"Trip to Portsmouth."
"Travels through Denmark."

Under this rule works connected with the Parliament of England should be entered under England: Parliament, but Parliamentary reports under the subject of the report.

Almanacs, calendars, directories, etc., should be entered under the name of the institution or locality to which they refer.

It is the practice of some cataloguers to group such classes

as almanacs and calendars under a common heading, arranging them alphabetically, with ample cross-references. The only advantage that we can detect of thus grouping them together under a common heading is, that it enables one to see at a glance what the library possesses in the particular class. But the calendar of a certain university, or the directory of a given town, will be much more frequently asked for than the question: How many of such works are in the library?

In the same manner laws or codes of laws should be entered under the names of the countries to which they belong, even when the code goes by the name of a person, as "Codex Justinani" or "Code Napoléon," but in the case of the last two a cross-reference should be made from Napoleon and Justinian.

Catechisms, creeds, confessions of faith, etc., which are, strictly speaking, anonymous, should be arranged under the denominations to which they belong, or the specific title:—

"Apostles' Creed."
"Athanasian Creed."
"Nicene Creed."
"Westminster Confession."
Dort.
Lutheran.
Moravian.
Trent.

Councils of the Church under the place where they were held:—

"Trent," "Vatican" (*not* Rome), "Lateran".
"Westminster," "Cologne," "Nimes".

Transactions or publications of learned societies *not* according to locality as in the British Museum catalogue, unless the local name forms part of the style as:—

"Kilkenny Archæological Society,"
"Aberdeen Archæological Society,"
"Oxford Historical Society,"

but under the style of the society, which is much more familiar to most readers than the place of meeting or publication:—

"Royal Historical Society."
"Surtees Society."
"Chetham Society."
"Bannatyne Club."
"Spalding Club."

Periodical publications have, strictly speaking, no author, and must be treated as anonymous, and arranged under the first word of the title:—

"Nineteenth Century."
"Fortnightly Review."
"Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen" (although in this instance the editor's name, O. Hartwig, is found upon the title).
"Revue des deux Mondes."

Not under place of publication, as in the British Museum rules.

Collected works of several writers with a collective title as:—

Muratori: "Rerum Italicarum Scriptores".
Ugolini "Thesaurus Antiquitatum Sacrarum".
"Monumenta Germaniæ Historica."
"Analecta Hymnica medii aevi."
"Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum."

For the older completed works which are not likely to undergo any change of editorship, the main entry should be arranged under the editors or the collective title, whichever is best known:—

"Muratori," "Ugolini,"
"Monumenta Germaniæ Historica,"
"Analecta Hymnica," *not* Dreves or Blume,

with, of course, ample cross-references from first-word title, editors, etc.

Such modern collections as:—

"Men of Action,"
"English Leaders of Religion,"
"Epochs of English History,"
"Analecta Hymnica,"

would be much better under the first-word of title instead of the editor, simply because it would obviate the difficulty arising out of the constant change of editors which some of these series undergo.